MUSICIANS IN RHYME

FOR CHILDHOOD'S TIME

BY

REBEKAH CRAWFORD LOUISE MORGAN SILL

AND

ALBERT D. BLASHFIELD

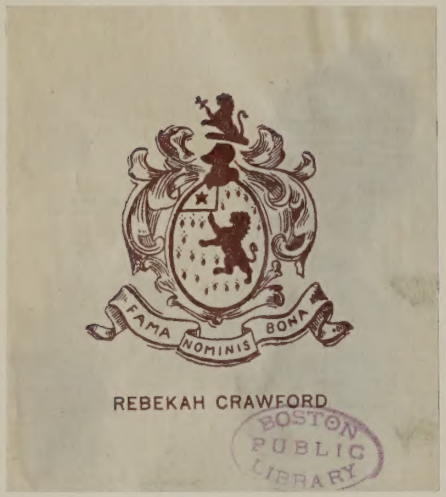
Beethoven in a storm.

Presented to the Public Library
of the City of Boston.

The more of pains the artist takes,
The more with diligence he strives,
So much the more his purpose thrives.
Then practice every day: you'll see
What the result of this will be.
For thus is every aim attained,
What's hard at first with ease is gained,
Until at length your very hand
Itself appears to understand. Goethe.

Rebekah Crawford

Jan. 23d 1926.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Musicians in Rhyme for Childhood's Time.

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BY
REBEKAH CRAWFORD
AND
LOUISE MORGAN SILL.

With Illustrations by
Albert D. Blashfield

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DEDICATED

TO

THE LITTLE STUDENTS OF MUSIC.

Preface.

Music and rhyme are among the earliest pleasures of the child, and in the history of literature, poetry precedes prose. Every one may see, as he rides on the highway through an uninteresting landscape, how a little water instantly relieves the monotony, no matter what objects are near it, a gray rock, a grass patch, an elder bush, or a stake, they become beautiful by being reflected. It is a rhyme on the eye and explains the charm of rhyme on the ear.

Emerson.

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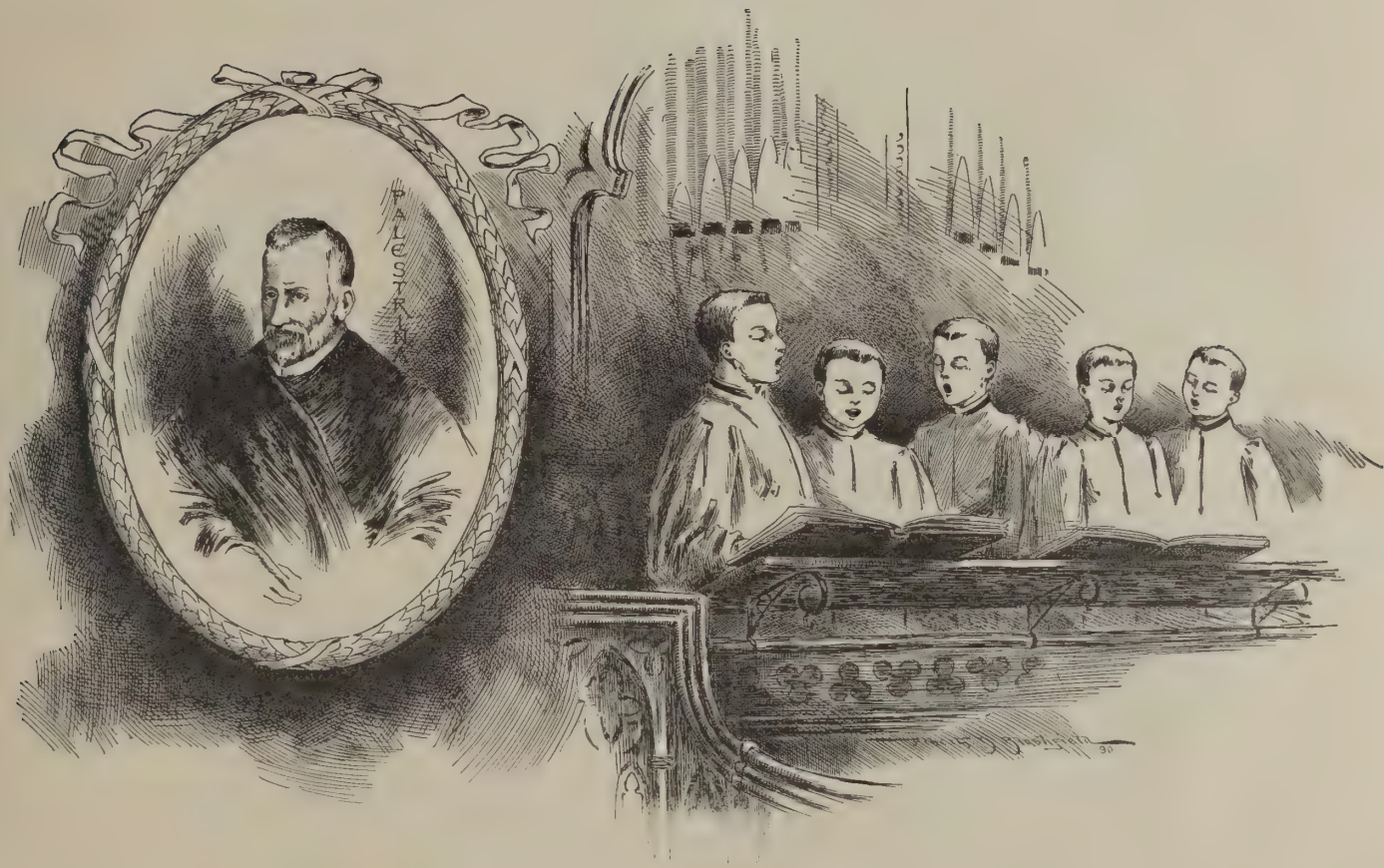
Giovanni Perluigi da Palestrina.

Born 1524 Died 1594

Far back, within the 16th Century,
So long ago it seems to you or me!
Lived Palestrina, father to the rest
Of great musicians, who the world have blessed.

The town of Palestrina was his home,
But he was sent in early youth to Rome,
And there his studious, faithful life he passed,
And labored with his music to the last.

His masses were the loftiest in tone.
The Church, in all her history, had known,
And to this day no grander chords are rung
Than those by Palestrina's Triads sung.


PALESTRINA

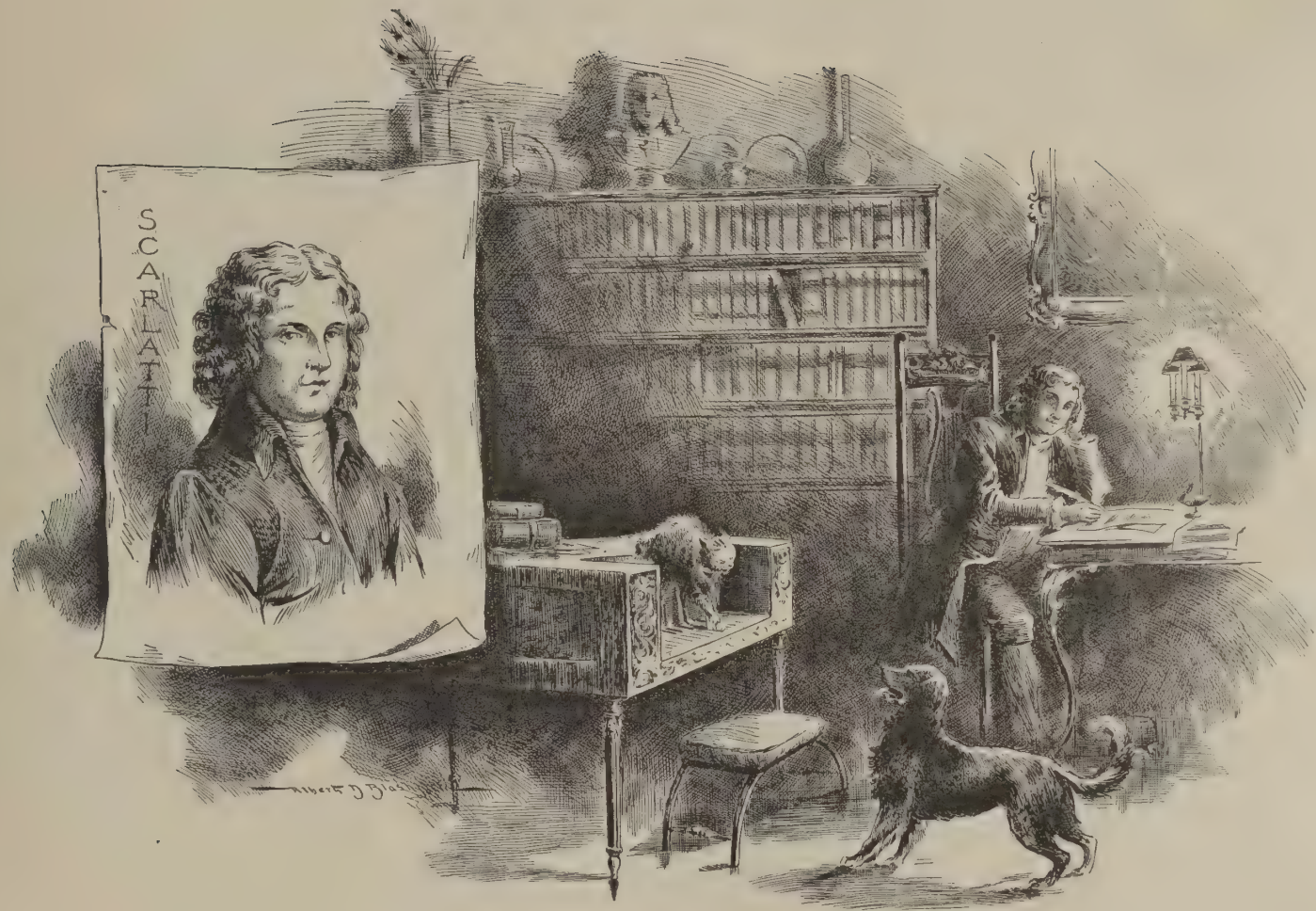
Alessandro Scarlatti.

Born 1683 Died 1757.

Scarlatti, in Italy born, was the one
Who wrote "The Cat's Fugue"; this is how it was done.

He was sitting one night in his study alone,
Regretting that nothing all day he had done,
No sweet inspiration had flown to his brain,
And this to composers, you know, causes pain!
By his side his pet cat sat demurely upright,
Blinking her eyes in the fast-fading light,
When suddenly there in the doorway appeared.
The dog of his neighbor, that everyone feared.
He flew at the dignified cat, as dogs do,
Destroying her comfort and dignity, too;
To an arch, rose her back, and her eyes flashed like fire,
Her tail grew to three times its size in her ire,
And suddenly up on the spinet she sprang
While chords of wild music beneath her feet rang.
Scarlatti arose and embracing his pet,
He said, "From that discord an idea I get",
This he charmingly played while the cat smoothed her fur,
And named it "The Cat's Fugue" in honor of her.

Of his son named Domenico here we must speak,
For he was the founder of modern technique:


SCARLATTI

Johann Sebastian Bach.

Born 1685 — Died 1750

The great Johann Sebastian Bach
Was born in German Eisenach.

No laggard he his task to shirk,
Or call his music-practice "work."

His brother was his teacher when
The little Bach was only ten.

But though so young, he longed each day
For notes more difficult to play.

These notes his brother did forbid
And from the boy his music hid,

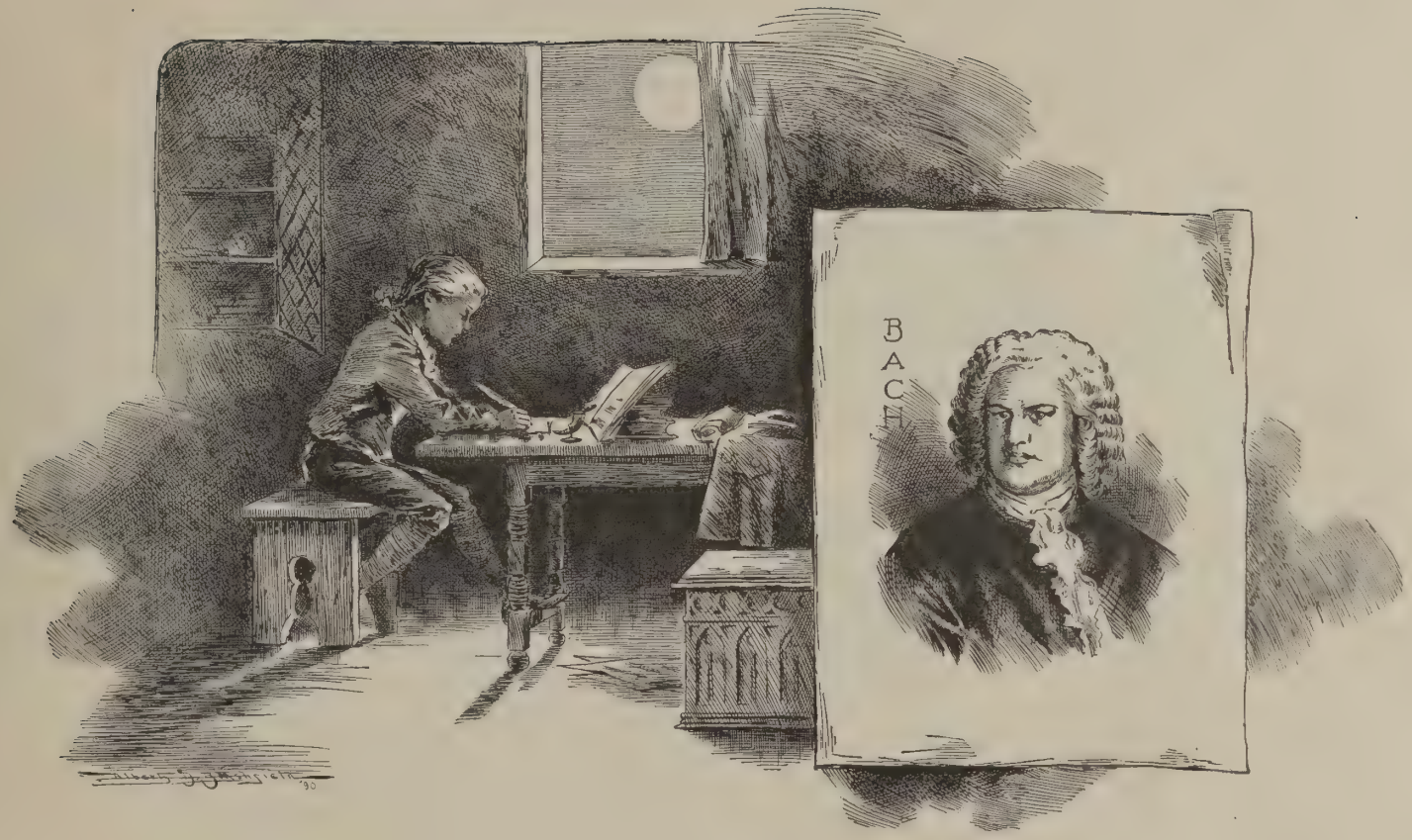
But through the cupboard's latticed door
Bach stole the tempting music score.

And every night by moonlight wrote
His patient copy note by note.

This secretly he learned, and played,
And thus his brother quite dismayed!

Bach, master of the "Fugue" became,
Which won for him immortal fame.

And though at last he lost his sight
His faith in God made darkness light.


BACH

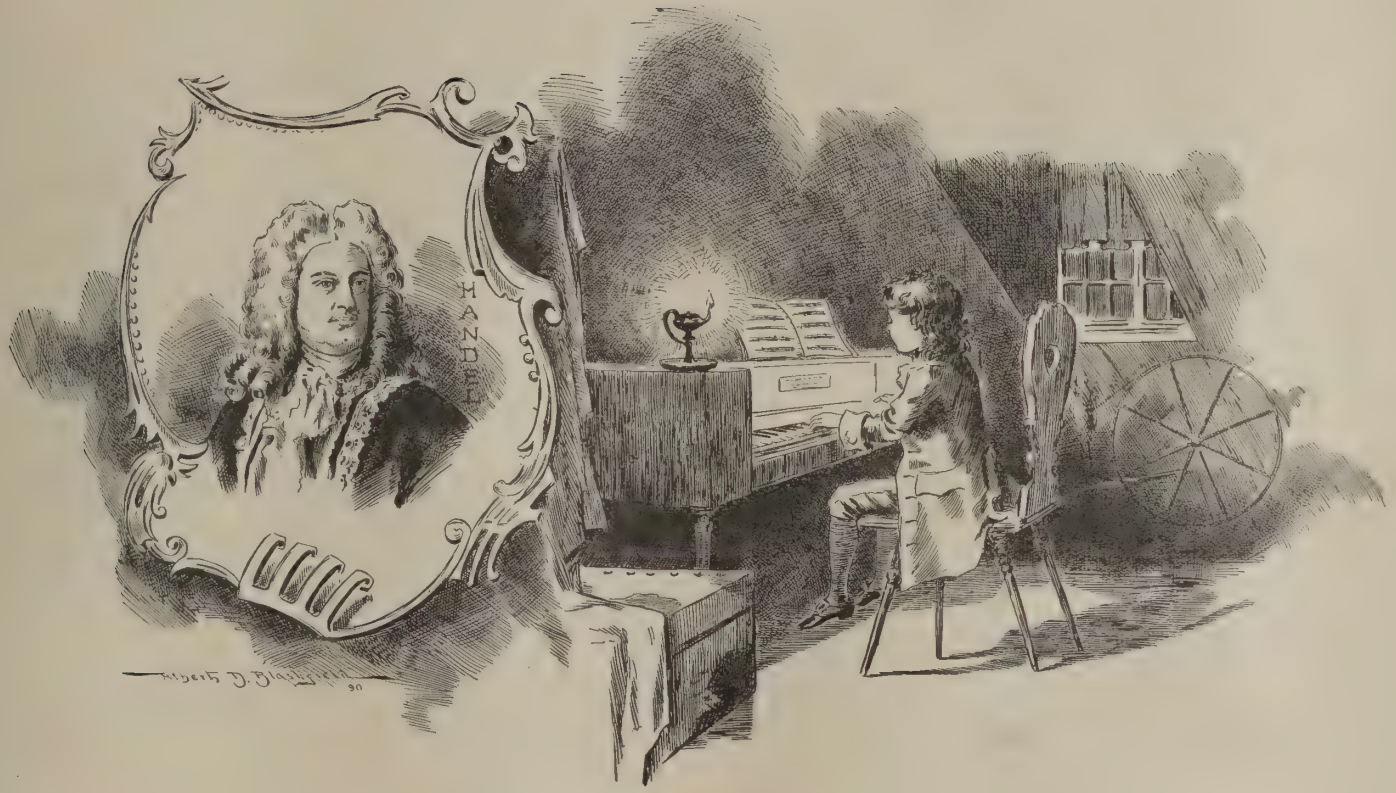
George Frederick Handel.

George Frederick Handel in
Saxony born
When a boy loved his music much more than a game,
But his youthful ambition was treated with scorn,
And his music his father threw into the flame.

In secret he played in the garret alone.
Such beautiful music as never was known:
Till a good German Duke heard this marvellous creature.
And forced the stern father to
give him a teacher.

Born 1685.
Died 1759.

Of his works the "Harmonious Blacksmith" we note,
And in one single month "The Messiah" he wrote,
While he steadily rose to great honor and fame,
And the works of his genius immortal became.


HANDEL

Christopher Willibald von Gluck.

Born 1714 — Died 1787

Gluck was born in Germany,
Of a worthy race was he.

In his youth at village fairs
For the dance he fiddled airs.

Playing melodies so sweet,
That none could still the restless feet.

A friendly Prince, who heard him play
Sent him to Italy away –

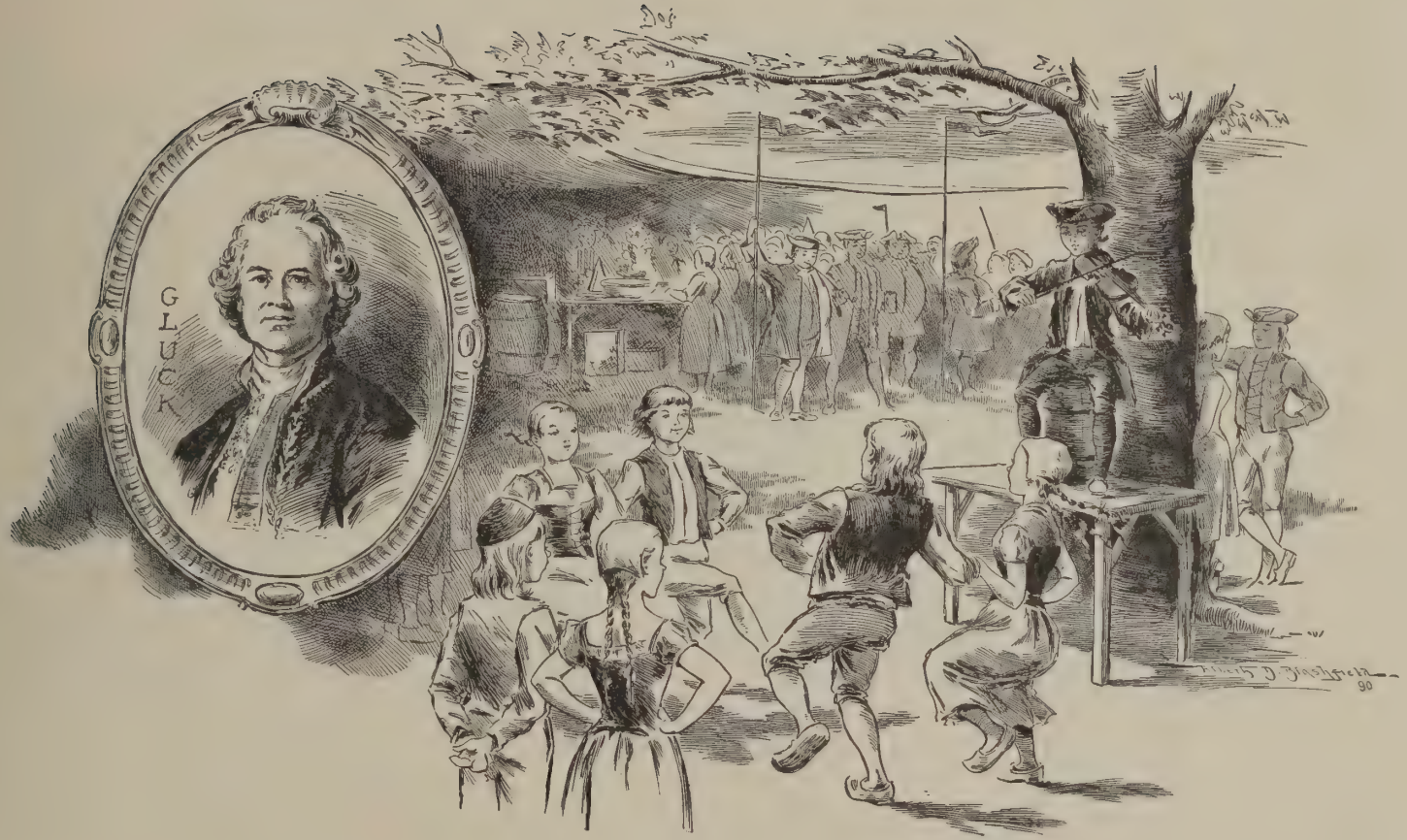
Where teachers taught to Gluck the art,
He loved with all his earnest heart.

Wise he grew in music's lore
Royal thrones he played before.

And gave to all such great delight
A King created him a knight

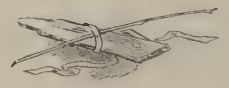
To music all his life was given,
He won the fame for which he'd striven;

And of dramatic opera he,
The founder now is known to be.


GLUCK

Franz Joseph Haydn.

Born 1732



Died 1809

Haydn was a homely child,
Fond of fun, but kind and mild;
One of a numerous family,
All as poor as poor could be.

Yet loving music, every one
And so each day, at set of sun,
Around their father's harp they came,
To pass the time with song and game.

Joseph, full of childish tricks
Played a fiddle of wooden sticks,
Keeping time till his father said,
Children 'tis the hour for bed"

This little boy was sent away
To Hainburg school by a friend one day.
And there he was taught by note to sing,
And learned a little of everything.

Later forced to earn his bread,
Living alone in the town, ill fed,
Oft he had nothing to eat all day,
Yet still at his music he worked away.

Tho' suffering thus he ne'er lost heart,
His faith in God, or love for Art,
And thus by patient toil and slow,
He made the world his genius know.

Haydn wrote the grand "Creation"
Sung and loved by many a nation,
And he is also known to be
The "Father of the Symphony"

His life he filled with kindly deeds,
Forgot his own in other's needs,
And died revered by every friend,
Loved and admired to the end.

HAYDN

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Born 1756

Died 1791

In their home at Salzburg town,
Lived a pretty boy and girl,
Little Wolfgang Mozart he,
She, his sister, sweet Nannerl.

Nannerl played her music well;
Little Mozart standing by –
Only three years old he was–
Gravely asked if he might try.

At the harpsichord he sat,
And by ear the music played,
As he heard his sister do;
Not a single fault he made!

Wonderstruck his parents heard,
Saw his baby fingers spread,
Stretched upon the keys, and then,
"'Tis a gift from God", they said!

So they reared the little boy,
With the tenderest of care,
And for kings and queens he played,
Winning wonder everywhere.

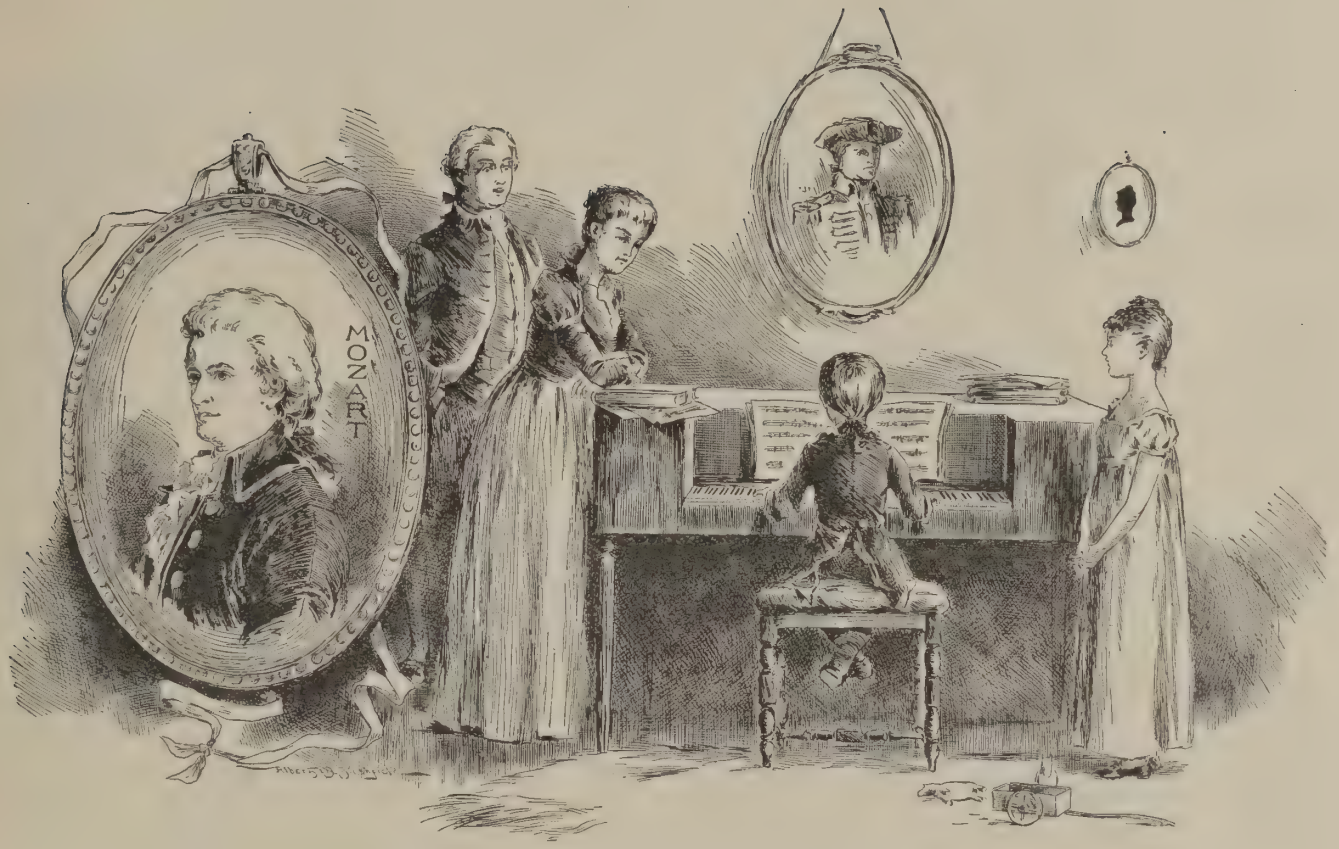
Music difficult to play,
At the age of five he wrote;
Writing it the child was found,
Daubed with ink from waist to throat.

People marveled at the boy,
Calling him the Child of Art,
Yet, unspoiled, he still remained,
Sweet of temper and of heart.

Strange it seems that this bright fame
Lessened as he older grew;
Many people passed him by,
They, alas! no better knew.

Poor he came to be, and ill
And the "Requiem" he wrote,
At his own sad death was played,
Full of pain in every note.

He who wrote "The Magic Flute,"
Many sorrows underwent,
In an unknown grave he lies,
Fame his only monument.


MOZART

Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Born 1770

Died 1827

Born in Bonn, Beethoven grew,
Just the same as I or you;
But his great and glorious name
Unforgotten it became
In the history of fame!

He was but a tiny boy
Caring not for game or toy;
And his father harsh, they say,
Made him practise all the day.

When at thirteen years one night,
Three Sonatas did he write,
Full of lovely sentiment,
Showing his poetic bent.

Fierce his temper and self-willed,
But with truth his heart was filled
And he loved the trees and flowers,
Owing them his happiest hours

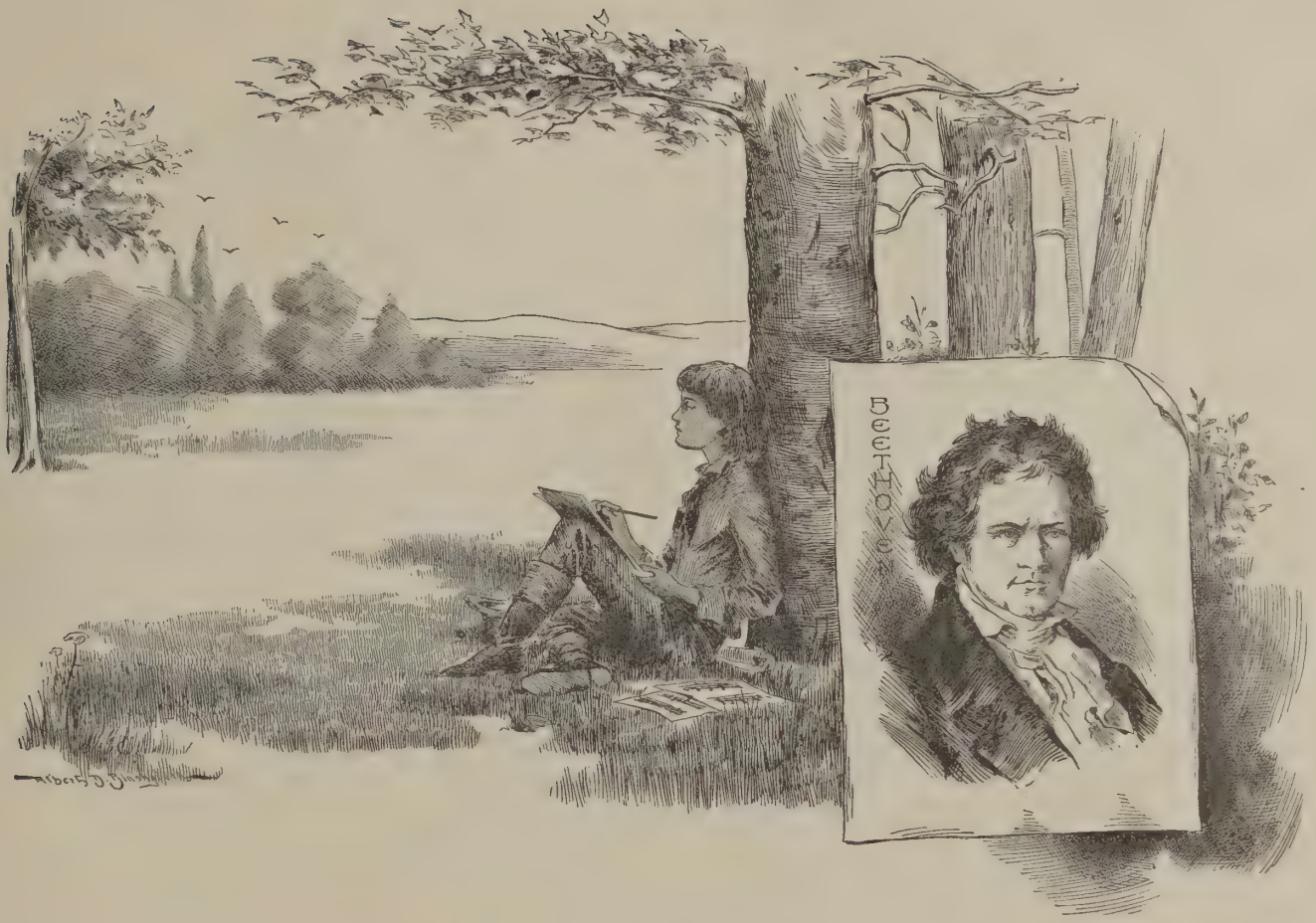
Old he grew, and deaf at length
And his music, played with strength,
Music to his soul so dear,
Fell unheard upon his ear.

Though a great renown he won,
For the wonders he had done,
Yet he lived, when older grown,
In his dusty room alone.

To his nephew Carl he gave
All the money he could save,
Yet the boy with heart of stone,
Left him there to die alone.

Strange his figure, as you see,
On the page of history.
Yet a truer, grander man
On that page we ne'er shall scan.

So did great Beethoven die,
Just as you must do, or I,
But his grand and glorious name
Unforgotten it became,
In the history of fame.


BEETHOVEN

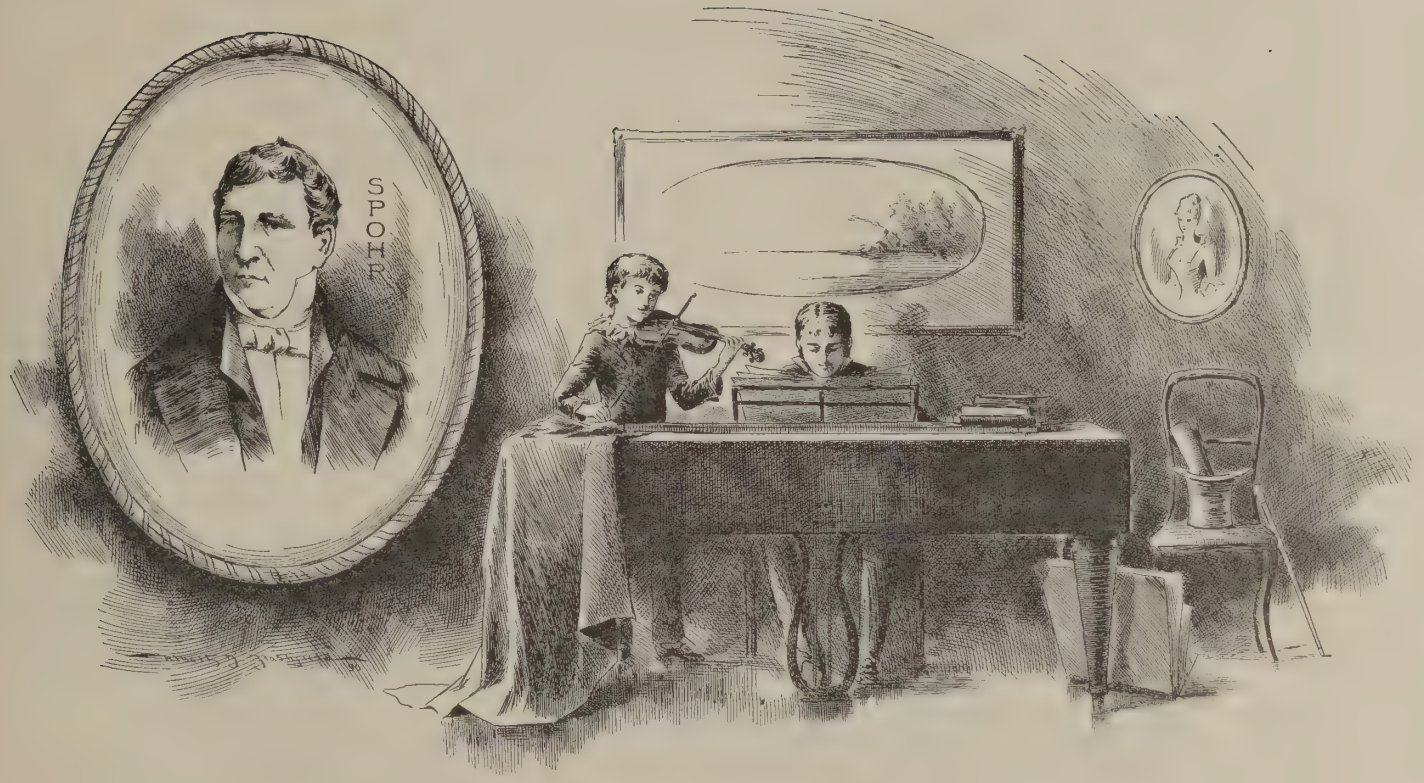
Ludwig Spohr.

Born 1784 — Died 1859

Spohr, the great writer for the violin,
And player on it, much was loved within
His native Germany, where oft he played,
And there his first renown and fortune made.

His father, a good doctor taught his son
The right to do, the wrong to leave undone,
And Ludwig seemed so promising a boy
A Duke for him a teacher did employ.

Early the lad his splendid gifts displayed,
And with hard work his patron kind repaid.
A useful life he lived, much music wrote,
And died ere age his pen with weakness smote.


SPOHR

Carl Maria Von Weber.

Born 1786 Died 1826

Weber, like Bach, of a musical race,
Through many musicians descent he could trace.
His father band-leader and actor was too,
And Weber the theatre thoroughly knew,
Which helped him when later "Der Freischütz" he wrote,
"Euryanthe" and "Oberon", too, we may quote
Weber began when quite young to compose
The music which now almost everyone knows
And gave to the Overture permanent dress,
Which never before it was known to possess.
Though trials he met, such as artists all meet,
His nature was noble, his temper was sweet;
He had a dear wife in whose love he found rest,
So we safely may say this musician was blessed!

WEBER

Giacomo Meyerbeer.

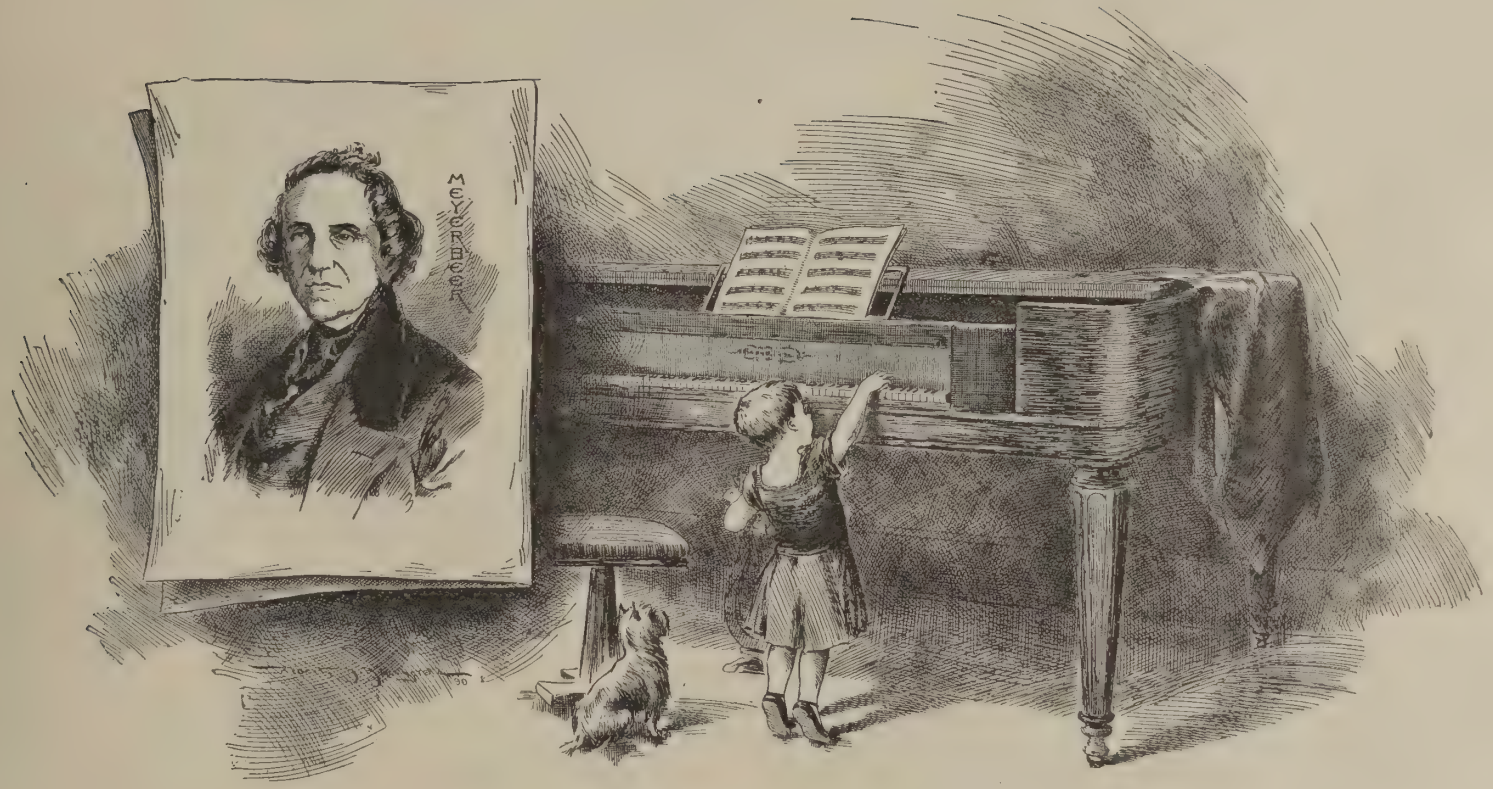
Born 1791 Died 1864

Meyerbeer of wealthy parents born,
Within Berlin first saw the light of morn.
When only four years old he learned by ear,
And, simply, played each tune he chanced to hear.

His father, struck by talent so decided;
At once a teacher for the child provided;
From that time on he wondrous progress made,
And when a tiny boy in public played.

Though other music to his skill attests,
His fame upon his operas now rests;
To him "Robert le Diable" we owe,
And "l'Africaine", and too, "Les Huguenots."

His goodly wealth an idler would have spoiled:
It harmed not him, for all the more he toiled.
In Paris his industrious life did end,
He died, lamented much by many a friend.


MEYERBEER

Gioachino Antonio Rossini.

Born 1792 Died 1868

Rossini, of Italian birth,
Has written 'William Tell',
An opera of the highest worth.
By all remembered well.

His father was the trumpeter
Of old Pesaro City;
His mother at the theatre
Sang every night a ditty.

Their little son, a boy of seven,
A lovely voice possessed,
So he upon the stage was given,
His part, just like the rest.

When still quite young, his music sweet,
Went flying north and south,
One heard his airs upon the street,
His tunes in every mouth.

He wrote "The Barber of Seville"
In only thirteen days,
Example of his rapid skill
That ever must amaze.

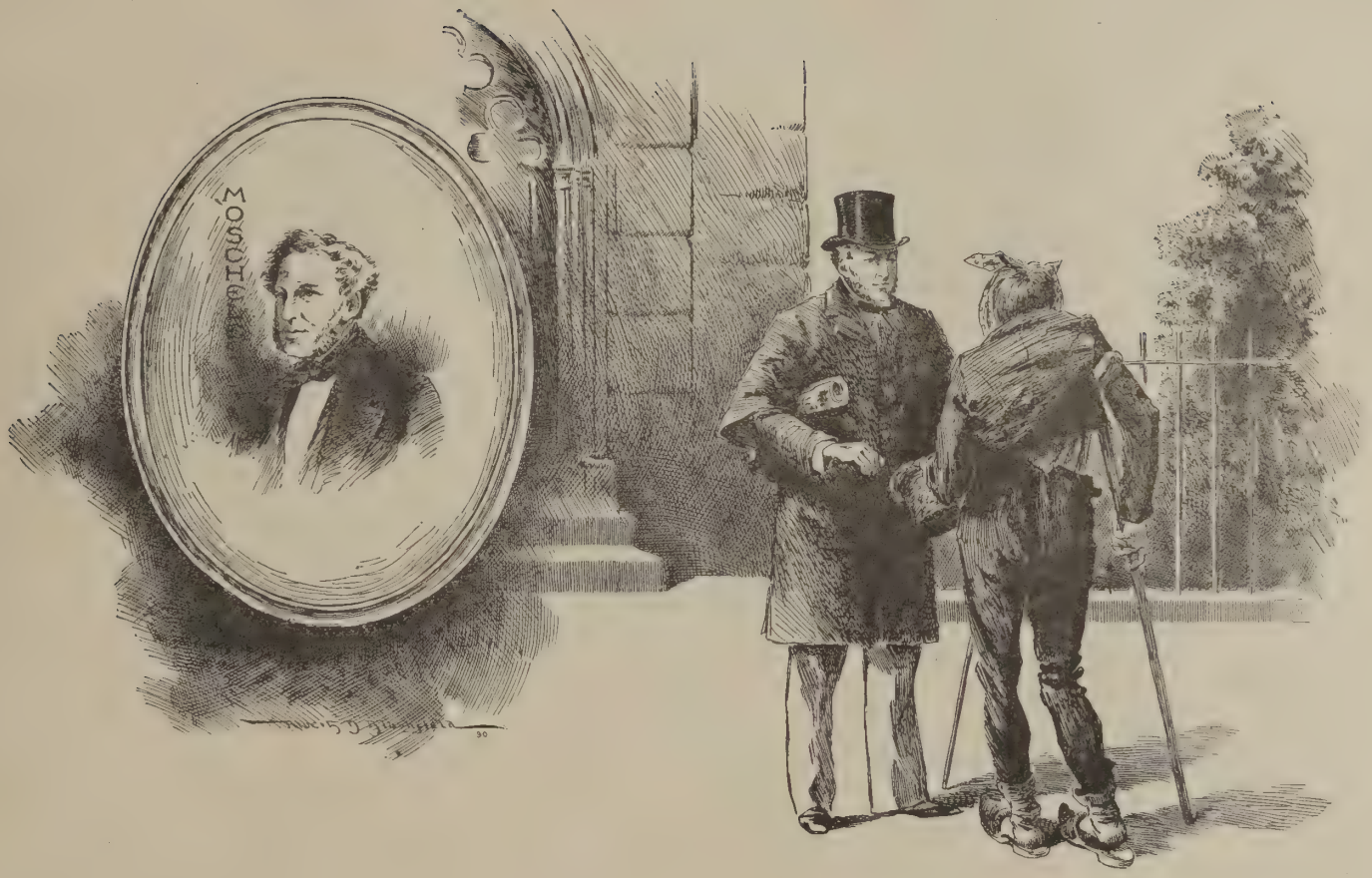
Yet idly many years he spent,
And not a thing did do,
Some say he was too indolent,
We hope it isn't true!

ROSSINI

Ignaz Moscheles.

Born 1794 Died 1870

Moscheles, when but a lad,
Musical ambition had,
His father was a wealthy Jew,
A devoté'e of music, too,
Who longed one child of his to see
A "thoroughbred musician" be
So little Moscheles began
To follow out the family plan,
And worked as all must do, indeed,
Who hope with music to succeed.
Upon piano-playing bent,
He mastered well that instrument.
And for good Queen Victoria played,
When she was such a little maid
Scarce were her ears with music fed.
When she was taken off to bed!
Moscheles with generous heart,
Oft gave to Charity his Art,
And dedicated all his skill
The larders of the poor to fill.
He also wrote for children all
Many pieces for fingers small,
Such as "The Boy on his Rocking-horse,"
And others which you know, of course?
First as teacher he was known,
Later, the friend of Mendelssohn,
And last, his good long life he ends
Mourned by his family and his friends.


MOSHO

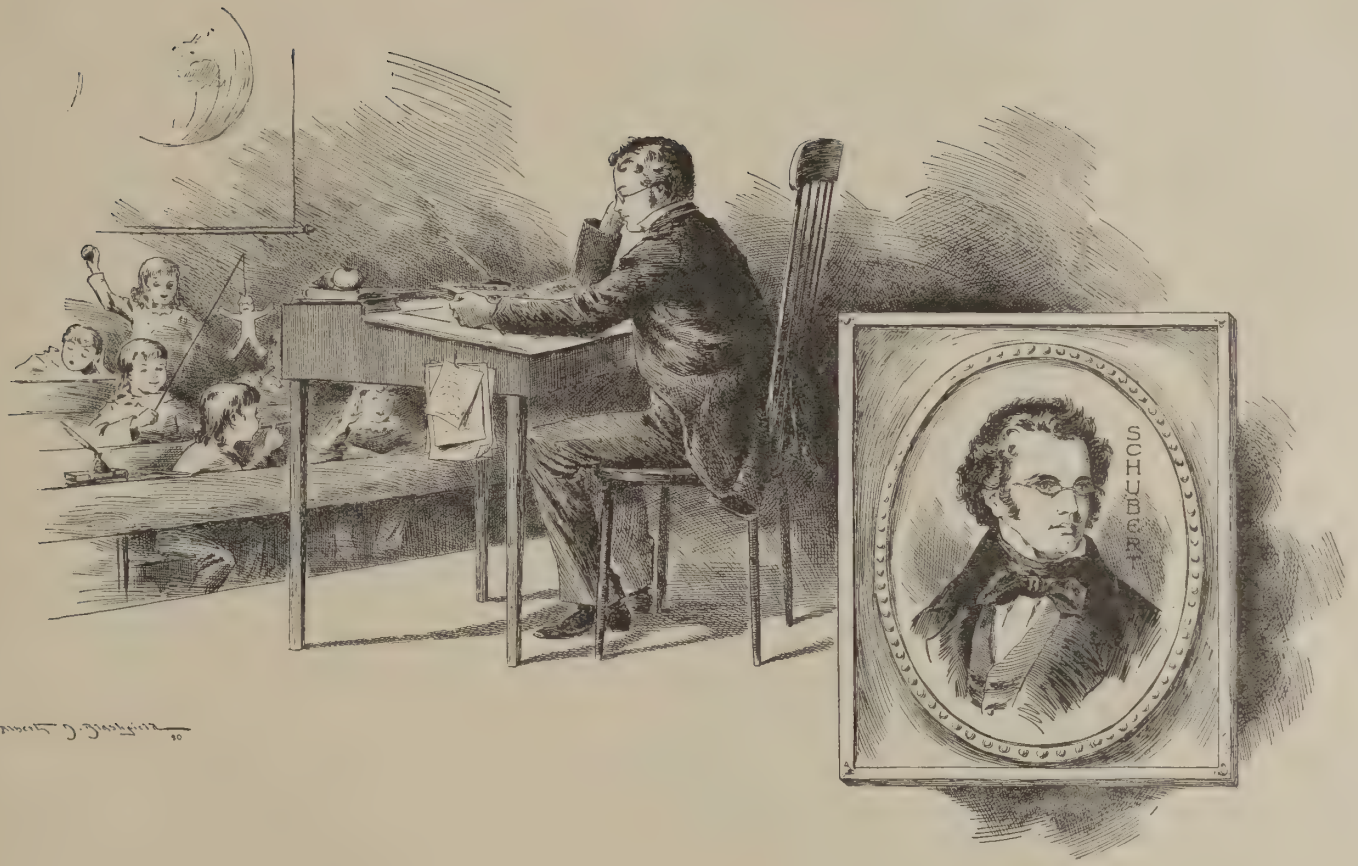
Franz Schubert.

Born 1797 Died 1828

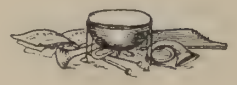
Franz Schubert, in Vienna born,
Was of musicians most forlorn.
Hard was his task, and stern the rule
Which made him daily teach at school.
The letters, when he tried to see
Were running off in melody,
While notes rushed in to take their place,
And filled with music all the space!

His friends declared that he could write
Sweet tones for any words at sight,
So constantly his busy brain
Was filled with some inspired strain.

Yet Schubert never lived to see
The product of his industry.
Of homely mien, and undersized,
His genius unrecognized,
He lived obscure, in humble ways,
Nor won till death the nations' praise.


SCHUBERT

Hector Berlioz.

Born 1803  Died 1869

Berlioz, born in a province of France,
Was destined the musical cause to advance.
His well-meaning father intended that he
In time a successful physician should be,
And sent him to Paris on learning intent,
But Berlioz knew it was not his true bent.
He studied Gluck's scores, and ere long he was led
To write the sweet music that haunted his head;
And soon he composed what we cannot forget,
His symphony "Romeo and Juliet."

His temper so warm plunged him often in strife,
And he made many enemies all through his life;
But high his ambition, and pure was his aim,
And in instrumentation he rose to much fame.

BERLIOZ
GLUCK

Felix Mendelssohn.

Born 1809. Died 1847.

Mendelssohn, in Hamburg born,
Of a cultured Jewish race,
Never knew the want or scorn
Many artists have to face.

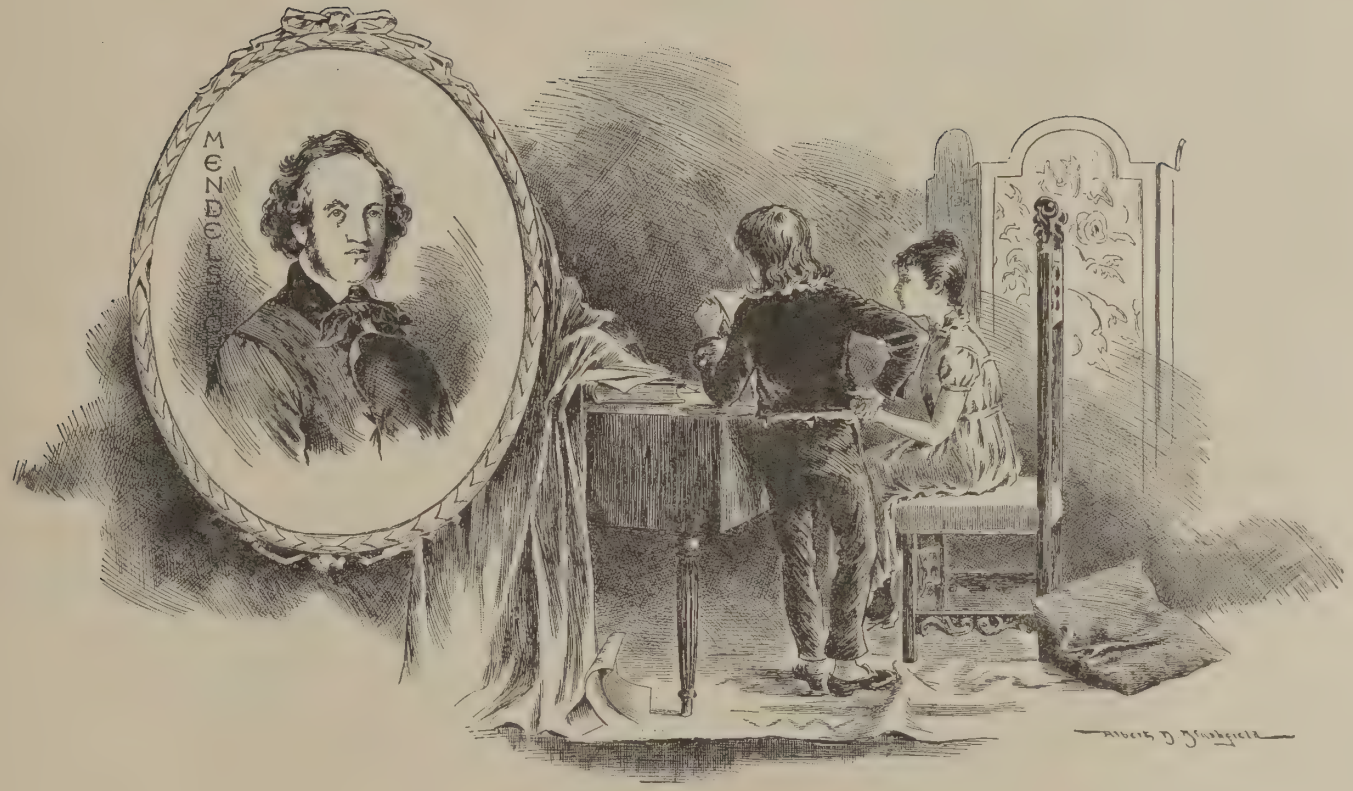
With his sister Fanny, dear,
Many cheerful hours he spent,
With her voice, and music, near,
Little Felix was content.

At an early age he wrote,
Music of a beauty rare;
It was played in lands remote,
Till his fame went everywhere.

Great his wordless "Songs" yet sweet,
Little need of words have they.
Language could not thus repeat
All the noble things they say!

Not alone musician he;
Well he sketched, and much he knew,
Goethe grew his friend to be.
Other great men loved him too.

Fortunate in life and heart,
Full of merriment and fun,
Famous in his chosen art;
Him we call the happy one.


MENDELSSOHN

Francois Frederick Chopin.

Born 1810 Died 1849

When Chopin was a boy, his beauty rare
And genius won him homage everywhere.
Of Polish birth, his parents well to-do,
Within a gentle atmosphere he grew.
Though long he lived upon a foreign strand,
His thoughts turned ever to his native land,
Whose sufferings filled his loving heart with woe,-
And to this grief much of his work we owe.

Once at the piano Chopin sat and played
To his young schoolmates, listening, half afraid,
At the strange robber-tale his fingers told,-
How they all broke into a house for gold,
And when the deed was done, ran far away
Into the woods, to sleep until the day.
And while sweet chords described their slumbers deep,
His little friends fell one by one asleep---
Then Chopin all with lively crash awoke,
The little sleepers laughing at his joke!

Poor Chopin died at Paris, ere his prime,
But left a name remembered for all time.

CHOPIN

Robert Schumann.

Born 1810 Died 1856

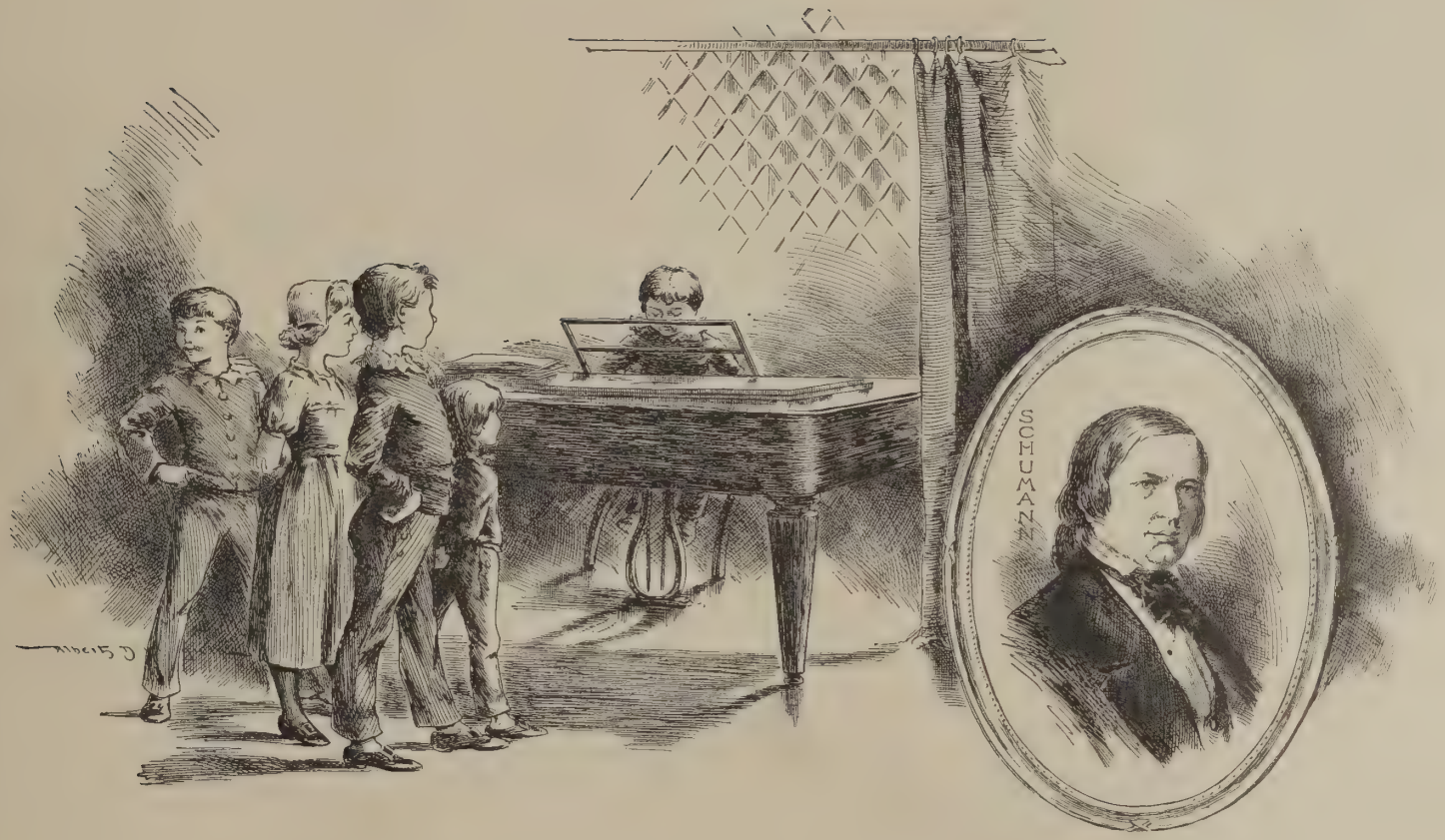
Schumann, born in Saxony,
By his parents meant to be
A lawyer, never studied law,
Or in it any pleasure saw,
But sang the livelong day instead
The music running in his head.

On the piano he would play
Funny pictures of friends, they say;
So like that they could recognize,
With tears of laughter in their eyes,
Each one as he was thus portrayed
By little Schumann as he played.

Most brilliant music he composed
When scarce his gifted youth had closed;
Concertos, songs and symphonies
He wrote his future wife to please.
A famous Pianiste was she,
A fitting mate for such as he.

To other artists generous,
Schumann will always seem to us
As good a man as ever grew
To be a sick and sad one, too,
When Melancholy in his mind
In place of Reason was enshrined.

No finer songs than his are sung,
Wherever Music finds a tongue,
Of children's music his is best
The sweetest and the merriest,
So lovely, we must all deplore
That Schumann lives to write no more!


SCHUMANN

Franz Liszt.

Born 1811 — Died 1886

Liszt as the King of Pianists was known,
For difficult playing he stands quite alone,
Such wonderful feats did his fingers perform,
He took every audience fairly by storm.

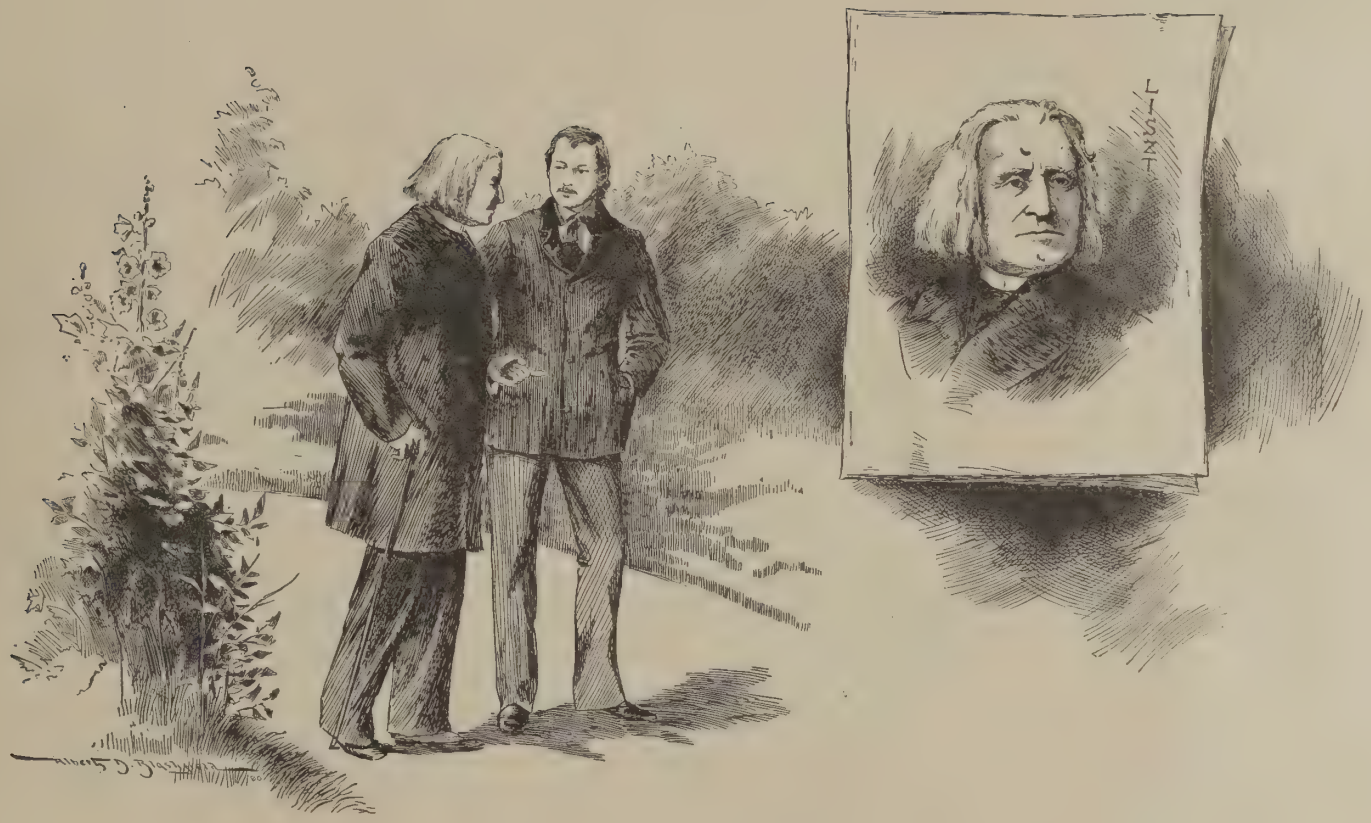
He first played in public when nine years of age.
Some noblemen heard him and said "We'll engage,
"For this little fellow, of teachers the best."
And Liszt from that moment by fortune was blest.

To older musicians he gave great delight
By reading their notes, without trouble, at sight;
And earned a large sum by his concerts one year,
Which people from everywhere travelled to hear.

He won, as a teacher, great credit and fame:
To him for instruction young Rubenstein came;
Carl Tausig, Von Bülow, and others less noted,
Were also his pupils, and to him devoted:

None had a more generous nature than Liszt,
Who loved all the weak and the poor to assist;
And though success crowned him, he never forgot
The needy musician's less fortunate lot.

He wrote many beautiful numbers, and then
The Hungarian Rhapsodies flowed from his pen.
At Beyreuth, where long he had taught, and had played,
He died, and near Wagner was reverently laid.

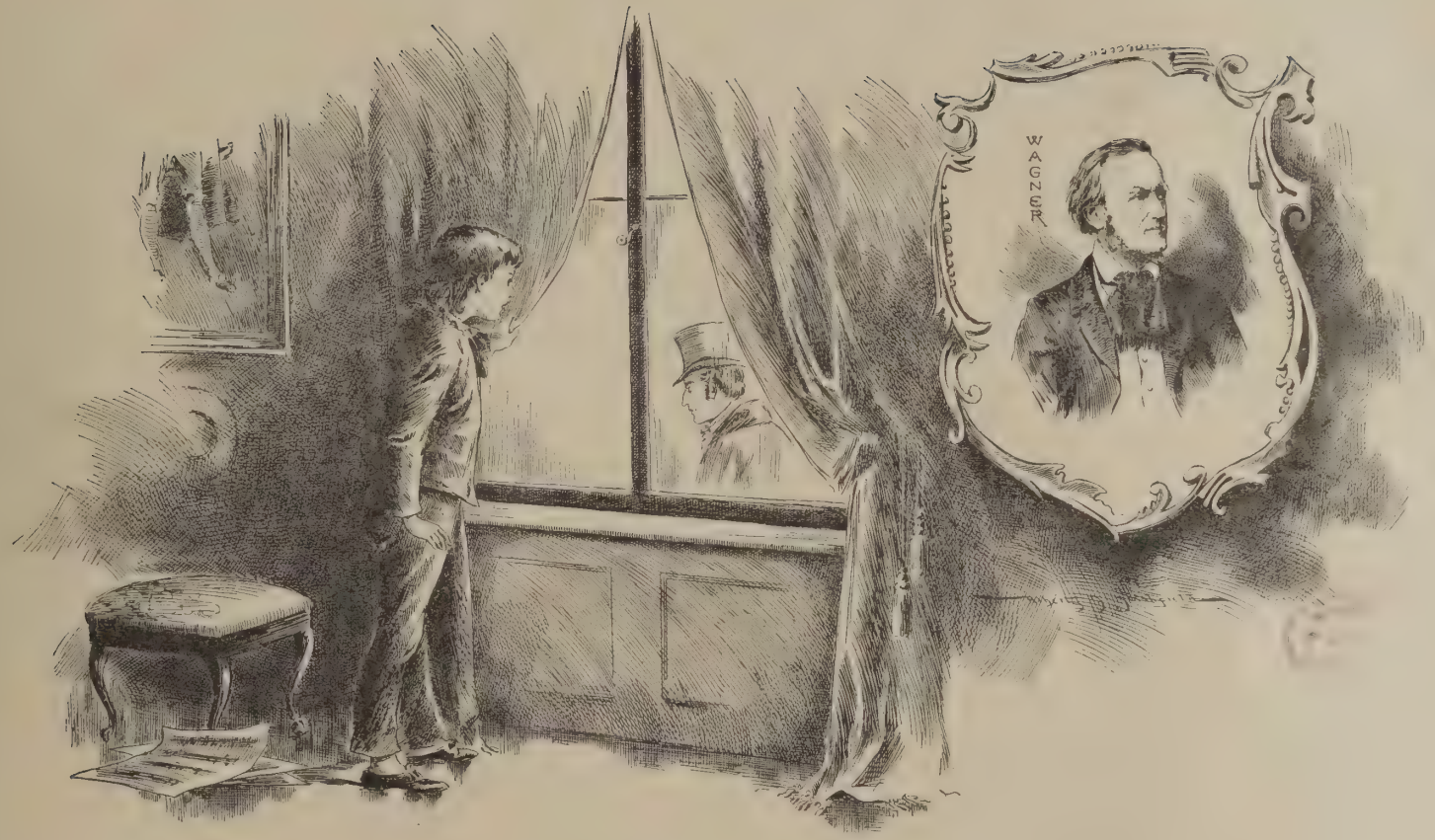

LISZT

Wilhelm Richard Wagner.

Born 1813 Died 1883

Young Wagner, they tell us, each night went to bed,
With the music of Beethoven under his head,
And, when younger, a Tragedy wrote where, they say,
All the people were dead ere the end of the play!
A symphony too, he composed at nineteen,
And ere he was thirty "Rienzi" was seen,
-Yet- Wagner, this wonderful German musician,
Held all his life an unhappy position.
Some thought him a genius, and others a bore,
A few listened gladly: cried others, 'no more."
"Tannhäuser" in Paris was treated with scorn,
"Lohengrin" in Germany scarcely was borne
By some of its critics, who madly cried out,
"What is all this stuff, and what is it about?"
But now are his enemies learning to see
That a great genius died in the year '83,
Whose name and whose work will outlive all the folk
Who laughed at his labor as if 'twere a joke.

In Venice he lived at the close of his life,
In a beautiful home with his children and wife,
And, finishing "Parsifal" ere his last breath
He left the whole City in tears at his death.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